

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 4, 7-10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 22 and 24 have been rejected on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,690,901; Claims 11, 12, 19, 20 and 23 have been rejected on the grounds of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,690,901 in view of Okauchi et al.; Claims 3-5, 7-15, 17-20 and 23-24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Kaiho and Claims 6, 16, 21 and 25 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 3-25 remain active.

Considering first then the rejection of Claims 3, 4, 7-10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 22 and 24 on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,690,901 and the rejection of Claims 11, 12, 19, 20 and 23 on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,690,901 in view of Okauchi et al., it is to be noted that a Terminal Disclaimer is being submitted herewith. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection on the basis indicated above of these claims is believed to be in order and the same is hereby respectfully requested. Furthermore, in view of the amendments now made to each of the independent claims in the present application, it is submitted that each of such independent claims also patentably defines over the claims of U.S. Patent No. 6,690,901.

Considering next then the rejection of Claims 3-5, 7-15, 17-20 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Kaiho, it is to be noted that Claim 3 has been amended to claim the casing as being arranged to support the operation panel within a back and forth

width direction of the casing as illustrated in the figures. Insofar as this differs from the casing of Kaiho as illustrated in the Figure sent forth therein, it is submitted that Claim 3 patentably defines over Kaiho. In this regard, it is noted that this structural feature of the present invention avoids bending of the casing when an operator strongly depresses the operation panel. Thus, due to mounting of the operation panel only on the casing rather than protruding therefrom, the operation panel is able to resist the force of a strong depression of the operation panel, unlike Kaiho. Insofar as similar limitations to those added to Claim 3 have also been added to the other independent claims, it is submitted that each independent claim and each claim dependent therefrom clearly patentably defines over Kaiho as well as the remaining references of record and those merit indication of allowability with the same being hereby earnestly solicited.

In view of the forgoing, an early and favorable office action is believed to be in order and the same is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

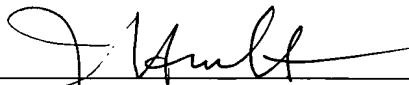
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